

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STAFF NOTE

Review Item:

Learning Forward Update

Applicable Statute or Regulation:

KRS 156.557, KRS 158.070, 704 KAR 3:345

History/Background:

Existing Policy. Kentucky is serving as the “Demonstration State” of a new initiative led by *Learning Forward*, formerly the National Staff Development Council, called *Transforming Professional Learning to Prepare College- and Career-Ready Students: Implementing the Common Core*. Through this partnership, Kentucky will receive training, coaching, and support from *Learning Forward* and other partner organizations over the next two years as a comprehensive system is developed/refined that incorporates professional learning practices and effective implementation of new standards. Georgia, Illinois, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Utah and Washington are contributing to the development of the system’s tools and strategies as “Critical Friend States” and learning from Kentucky’s challenges and accomplishments.

Learning Forward and the states are working in partnership with the Council of Chief State School Officers, National Governors Association, National Association of State Boards of Education and American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education on the initiative. Funding is supported by the Sandler Foundation, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and MetLife.

Kentucky’s proposal to Learning Forward included the following goals:

1. Implement and accurately assess/evaluate the effectiveness of Kentucky’s system of Leadership Networks to build the capacity of every school district to effectively implement the Kentucky Core Academic Standards (KCAS) within the context of highly effective teaching, learning and assessment practices.
 - a. School and district leaders will have a consistent vision and interpretation of highly effective instructional and assessment practices.
 - b. School and district leaders will understand the instructional intent and implications of the KCAS and will be able to provide specific feedback to teachers that enables them to grow as practitioners.
 - c. Teacher leaders will plan and implement instruction that reflects the intent of the KCAS, adjusting instruction based on student needs (determined by formative and summative assessment processes/data analysis).
 - d. District Leadership Teams will have policies and processes in place for scaling this work to all teachers.

2. Revise state policy regarding effective professional learning that is aligned to and supportive of Learning Forward's current *Standards for Professional Learning* and Kentucky's new teacher/principal effectiveness frameworks, P-20.
3. Establish next-generation professional learning experiences that reflect customized learning opportunities connected to student learning goals that are available 24/7 via Kentucky's Continuous Instructional Improvement Technology System (CIITS).
4. Create "model" local policy and provide supports for effective K-12 professional learning to support schools and districts.
5. Establish clear and coordinated protocols for gathering and/or using relevant and current data to inform and assess state-led P-20 professional learning.
6. Establish a quality assurance protocol for recommending or endorsing third-party professional learning providers in Kentucky.

In order to accomplish the goals outlined, Kentucky has set up a Professional Learning Task Force (PLTF) to advise the Kentucky Department of Education on creating a systemic infrastructure for supporting the growth and learning of all educators.

The Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education (SCOPE), under the direction of Linda Darling-Hammond, recently completed a report after reviewing Kentucky's professional development policy system (Attachment A). In conducting their review for *Learning Forward*, SCOPE researchers observed and participated in two of the state's Professional Learning Task Force meetings and examined over 30 documents and reports and interviewed 15 local and state administrators. They also engaged a small group of the state's National Board Certified Teachers, who currently are engaging in piloting Common Core lesson templates and assessment tools.

The report resulted in ten recommendations.

1. Develop a coherent conception of the work to be done and the resources and incentives needed to do it.
2. Integrate and coordinate professional development funding streams.
3. Better use the time teachers are investing in professional learning.
4. Leverage and connect K-12 and higher education resources.
5. Capitalize on teacher leadership (including NBCTs and other expert teachers).
6. Use well-designed student and teacher performance assessments to drive changes in teacher preparation and development.
7. Reinforce KTIP and build on successes.
8. Create a more coherent and a more accountable system of professional learning.
9. Take advantage of technology and online resources
10. Re-norm school cultures for the redesign of teaching and learning.

The PLTF prioritized the recommendations, elevating recommendations 8, 10, and 1 as those with the most leverage and potential for impacting the landscape of professional learning in Kentucky.

The PLTF will continue to meet through the fall of 2012 to create detailed and in-depth recommendations for the KDE regarding a systemic infrastructure for professional learning.

Policy Issue(s):

Kentucky's work with Learning Forward will inform recommended statute and regulatory change related to professional learning of teachers and leaders.

Impact on Getting to Proficiency:

In order for all students to be college and career ready, they must be taught by effective teachers who are receiving the support to grow professionally to best meet the needs of all students.

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Date:

June 2012